

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

CLICK HERE for Multiple Property Listing,
Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District
Multiple Property Submission"

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hamilton Park

other names/site number Park #9

2. Location

street & number 513 W. 72nd Street not for publication

city or town Chicago vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Cook code 031 zip code 60621

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William L. Wheeler, SHPO 3-17-95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
1	0	sites
0	1	structures
18	0	objects
21	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

The Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- LANDSCAPE/park
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
- EDUCATION/library
- OTHER/fieldhouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- LANDSCAPE/park
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
- EDUCATION/library
- OTHER/fieldhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/
- Beaux Arts
- MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation CONCRETE
- walls CONCRETE
- roof ASPHALT SHINGLE
- other VEGETATION

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Landscape Architecture

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Social History

Period of Significance

1904-1944

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Olmsted Brothers

Bennett, Edward; D. H. Burnham and Company

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Hamilton Park
Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 29.95

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	446880	4623480
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	16	447240	4623480

3	16	447130	4623080
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	16	446880	4623080

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Corina Carusi, J. T. Garofalo/Students (Masters of Science Hist. Pres.) School of The Art Institute of Chicago

organization Chicago Park District/Julia Sniderman date November 23, 1994

street & number 425 E. McFetridge Drive telephone (312) 747-0551

city or town Chicago state Illinois zip code 60605

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Chicago Park District

street & number 425 E. McFetridge Drive telephone (312) 747-0551

city or town Chicago state Illinois zip code 60605

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Hamilton Park

Hamilton Park is a 29.95 acre park located at 513 West 72nd Street and Normal Avenue on Chicago's south side. The land was purchased in 1904 by the South Park Commission as part of their plan for the establishment of neighborhood parks in tenement neighborhoods throughout the south side. In 1904, the firms of the Olmsted Brothers and D. H. Burnham and Company were contracted by the South Park Commission to work in collaboration in the architectural and landscape design of fourteen parks. Hamilton Park, first known as park number nine, was one of the ten that were built by 1905. Hamilton Park continues to be actively used and retains a high level of integrity.

Today, the park continues to maintain a strong degree of its historic character. It is composed of twenty-one contributing resources and two non-contributing features, all of which have been keyed to the plans attached to this nomination. The 1940 plan exhibits the original features and the changes made during the WPA period.

In the landscape design of Hamilton Park the Olmsted Brothers combined naturalistic forms with formal elements. They were greatly influenced by the formal European landscape design and the vocabulary of elements from the Columbian Exposition of 1893. They brought the German concept of zoning to Chicago and incorporated it in their own designs. The needs of the lower income communities were also reflected in the design for the parks. The guidelines were set by J. Frank Foster, the General Superintendent of the South Park Commission.

In order to clearly describe Hamilton Park and show that it has sufficient integrity for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, four plans have been submitted, the 1904 plan by the Olmsted Brothers [A], the 1909 plan by the Olmsted Brothers [B], the 1939 Chicago Park District Plan [C], a 1940 topographical survey [D], and the current plot plan [E]. Individual features have been numbered and keyed onto these plans. Since some of the features have been changed or are modern additions, all numbers do not appear on each plan.

Hamilton Park is bounded by 72nd Street on the north, 74th Street on the south, the Chicago & Western Indiana Railroad right of way on the west, and the Chicago Rock

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Island and Pacific Railroad right of way on the west side. These are the original boundaries of the park. The park is trapezoidal in shape, due to the fact that the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad heads in a northeast direction [B]. This configuration allowed more space in the northeast corner of the park for the tennis courts and the swimming pool. The fieldhouse and running track are located in the north central and northwest corner of the park. The central feature of the park is a large sunken ball field, which takes up approximately the southern two-thirds of the park. The view from the south end of the park extends across the ball field with the impressive fieldhouse as the main focal point. Surrounding the ball field on the southeast, south, and west are areas for passive recreation. The original park design excluded outdoor gymnasiums and children's apparatus [A]. This was primarily due to protests by the community. Other community residents later petitioned for these features which were implemented in the park by 1909 [B].

Hamilton Park's landscape features are considered one contributing site, but specific areas have been numbered individually for reference purposes. They include: perimeter areas [1], paths [2], viaducts [3] and walkways [4], the sunken ball field [5], the music court [6], and the men's open air gym area and running track [7]. There are two contributing buildings, the fieldhouse [8], and the boiler house [9]. Recreational features include; basketball courts [10], tennis courts [11], children's playground [12] spray pool [13], and handball court [14]. Non-contributing resources are the pool house/swimming pool [15] and service yard [16].

The central feature of the park is a large oval sunken ball field [5] with a tree lined perimeter walk [4]. The perimeter walk is similar to the "promenades" of earlier park design and serves as the main circulation system of the park. All the paths entering into the park lead to the walk which surrounds the ball field [2]. The curving lines of the path system in the park create meadows that are lawns, sometimes planted with trees, or are open areas with recreational facilities [B].

The Olmsted Brothers used plantings along the perimeter of the park to create a sense of enclosure [A]. According to the Landscape Gardener's Report (Annual Report of the

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South Park Commission, 1904) a large amount of plantings were originally added to the park. The planting plan by the Olmsted Brothers (1909) included numerous American Elm, Cottonwood, European Linden and many other trees and shrubs, as well as a variety of understory ground coverings. The heavy perimeter plantings surrounding the park were very informal and natural with irregular spaced trees and shrubs. Formal rows of trees were planted along 72nd and 74th avenues, the path surrounding the ball field, and on the music court in front of the fieldhouse [A]. There has been some decline and removal of vegetation, but the existing plantings are generally consistent with Olmsted Brothers planting plan. New plantings have recently been added to the park.

On the east and west perimeters of the park, there are two centrally located viaducts. These concrete viaducts lead under the elevated railroad tracks into the park at 73rd Street [3]. Above the arch of the entrance, "Hamilton Park" and "1916" are inscribed in the concrete. Originally, the park was level with the railroad tracks, but in 1916 the railroad lines were raised and the landform was sloped upwards towards the railroad right of ways on the east and west. This was in order to raise the grade of the tracks without building a retaining wall. A substantial iron fence was erected along the right of ways. Today, fencing remains to separate the tracks from the park. The perimeter plantings along the east and west sides of the park remain consistent with the historic design [1]. These perimeters were originally planted heavily with trees and shrubs, probably to block out railroad pollution.

Located in the northeast section of the park is the main area for active recreation today. This is where there are a number of recreational features that were constructed since the park's period of significance. These include the swimming pool and pool house [15], basketball courts [10], and spray pool [13]. The modern concrete swimming pool and pool house were constructed in the 1970's. The pool house is a one story red brick building with a gable roof and exposed rafter tails. Both the pool and pool house are enclosed by a vertical iron fence which can be seen through. The spray pool was constructed after the 1940's. Also located in this area, are the tennis courts [11] and children's playground [12]. These program components were added to the park by 1909 and are shown in the Olmsted Brothers plan of that year [B]. They have been upgraded and changed over the years, but

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are generally in their historic locations [E]. In spite of the changes in recreation in this section of the park, the original path system remains intact.

There have been some alterations to the north perimeter of the park, mainly due to the 1932 addition to the fieldhouse. Originally, there was a large wading pool and sand courts on the north end of the fieldhouse, placed between the two wings of the building [A]. These were removed when the theater and the branch of the Chicago Library [D] were added to the fieldhouse on the north. A short walkway leading directly south from the perimeter sidewalk to the library entrance was also added, and it was centered between the two original walkways. The two original walkways appear to be intact [E]. In 1936, a much smaller wading pool with two small sand courts was placed in the children's playground area at the northeast section of the park [C]. It was later converted to just a spray pool [E].

The northwest section of the park is the area where the men's open air gymnasium and running track were created [7]. Today, the meadow is still intact, and a depression in the field where the running track was can be seen. A one and a half story boiler house was added to this area along the northwest perimeter of the park in 1931, facing the west side of the fieldhouse [9]. Designed by the in-house architects of the Chicago Park District, it is an imposing service building constructed of poured in place aggregate concrete walls with cast-in pilasters. The design highly complements the fieldhouse. The exterior walls of the boiler house are unpainted marblecrete. Small windows are centered in the upper portion of the wall and the hipped roof is covered with asphalt tiles. A concrete handball court was added to the park in the 1950's, south of the boiler house and to the west of the music court [14].

Located at the southeast section of the park is the service yard [16]. The original plan for the service yard dates from 1905 and appears on the 1909 Olmsted Brothers plan [B]. The service yard is an open area contained by a concrete wall. This wall is constructed of large aggregate similar to the other buildings in the park. In 1915, the entrance of the service yard was changed from the west side, towards the railroad, to the east side. This change was due to the construction of a viaduct under the Western Indiana Railroad at

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74th Street. A depression in the driveway made access to the service yard impossible. A short path leading from the service yard entrance to one of the existing interior paths of the park was added. The walls of the service yard were rebuilt in the 1980's in its original location.

One of the most impressive features of Hamilton Park is the large sunken ball field [5], centrally located in the southern two-thirds of the park. It is on axis with the fieldhouse and music court to the north. A wide stairway in front of the music court leads down into the depressed field and six smaller sets of stairs lead down into the field on the other sides. In the winters, the sunken ball field was flooded and frozen for skating. The field was originally contained by an iron railing. A concrete retaining wall was constructed in the early 1940's.

On each side of the stairs which lead down into the ball field are nine planting urns. These eighteen urns are placed on pedestals eighteen feet apart, along the curved edge of the music court. These decorative urns were added to the park in 1908. Behind the urns were eight foot wooden seats. Two of these seats were placed two feet apart between each of the trees planted along this edge [F]. These seats have since been removed. Originally, there was one urn on each side of the bottom stair. The two pedestals remain intact, but the two urns have been removed. These decorative planting urns were typical of many of the parks, and it is very unusual today to find an intact grouping still in existence.

Located between the fieldhouse and the sunken ball field is a curved and paved terrace, originally used as a music court [6]. It remains intact, except for the removal of the original small wooden band shell and the loss of some of the American Ash trees that once graced the area. Originally, a grid of four rows of eight parallel trees was planted in the music court. These trees no longer exist and the music court is now paved with asphalt and used as a parking lot. Fortunately, the original tree line along the outer edge of the music court remains intact. Mature canopy trees are planted at regular intervals along this edge, providing a framework for the view of the fieldhouse from across the ball field.

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The Hamilton Park Fieldhouse was designed by Edward Bennett of Daniel H. Burnham and Company and constructed in 1905. Bennett's training at the Ecole de Beaux Arts and the influence of Burnham, his mentor, inspired his strong belief in the use of classical elements for the community. The fieldhouse [8] is extremely well suited to the site. It is situated at the north end of park with the main entrance facing the playing field. The fieldhouse is an impressive structure, with its bold classical form and symmetrical wings commanding the park. It is E-shaped in plan and constructed of poured in place concrete walls with large exposed aggregate. Today, the exterior walls of the fieldhouse are painted a pale yellow.

The fieldhouse is a two story central pavilion flanked on each side with one and a half story wings. The central pavilion extends in an east-west direction and has a hipped asphalt roof. The one and a half story wings project towards the north and contain the men and women's gymnasiums. These wings have a gabled roof and each of these have a smaller projecting wing with shed roofs. These house the locker rooms. The 1932 addition, which houses the auditorium and the branch of the Chicago Public Library, projects to the north between the one and a half story outer wings [C]. Originally all the roofs were clay tile, but have been replaced with asphalt.

The composition of the fieldhouse is divided into three sections. The base is defined by four concrete stairs leading up to the main entrance on the south and by a raised basement on the other sides of the building. The basement windows are located at ground level. The first level is divided from the second story by a stringcourse. At the second story is a decorative frieze with a row of windows. Located at the roof line are dentils. The roof has a broad overhanging eave with exposed rafter tails.

Across the front facade of the fieldhouse at the first level are three large round arched window and door openings, or bays, divided by paired pilasters. The main double door entrance to the fieldhouse is located in the center bay. The door is flanked on each side with sidelights. Inside the other two arched openings are square window lites. The concrete capitals have ornamental center flowers. Other details such as decorative scrolls, enhance the marblecrete exterior. In the upper story there is a diamond shaped cast

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detailing in the wide frieze which creates a band that continues around the entire structure. In the frieze of each bay there are four double hung sash windows with transoms flanked by two sets of paired double hung windows with transoms. The south facade of the east and west wings are symmetrical in design with three pairs of small union jack windows. These bays are less decorative in detail than the central pavilion, except for the diamond shaped cast concrete detailing in the frieze. The south facade of the smaller projecting wings that house the locker rooms have three small union jack windows with the decorative cast detailing above.

The east and west facades of the original fieldhouse are identical to each other in design and detail. This is where the gymnasiums and the projecting wings that house the locker rooms are located. The east and west facades of the gymnasiums are divided into four bays, separated by pilasters. The only ornamental detailing is the decorative frieze across the facade. The facades have minimum fenestrations at the first and lower levels. They are limited to emergency exits and basement windows that appear after the 1932 addition. Four union jack windows are located at the upper level of the gymnasiums in each of the four bays. There are windows located under the eaves of the two smaller shed roofed wings.

The fieldhouse was modified in 1932 with an addition on the north facade [C]. This addition included a branch of the Chicago Public Library, a theater auditorium, and the extension of the men's and women's gymnasiums. The addition was designed by the in-house architects of the South Park Commission in 1931. There is an excellent transition between the original structure and the addition, in that the architects used the same exposed aggregate on the exterior as the original structure. The auditorium is two stories and the library is one and a half stories. Some of the decorative detailing used by D. H. Burnham and Company in the design of the original building, is also incorporated in the addition. These include the decorative frieze and pilasters.

The north facade of the fieldhouse is divided into three projecting wings. The east and west wings house the gymnasiums, and the central wing houses the auditorium and the library. The north facade of the central wing is divided into three bays. The entrance to

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the library is located in the central bay. Eight concrete stairs with a rail lead up to a small open portico with a concrete balustrade. The wooden double door is flanked by concrete pilasters and a projecting lintel. Above the doorway is an octagonal transom. This central bay is flanked by a pair of pilasters identical to the ones on the south facade. The outer bays are flanked by wide corner pilasters. There are a set of double sash windows in the center of these bays. At the roof line is the same broad overhanging eave with exposed rafter tails as on the original south facade.

The north facades of the one and a half story outer wings of the field house, which houses the gymnasiums, also have the union jack windows. These are arranged in three sections, with two pairs on the outside and three pairs in the center. There are exposed rafter tails at the roof line. Before the addition in 1932, there were more windows which extended up closer towards the roof line in an arched configuration. These were changed when the gymnasiums were extended towards the north.

The fieldhouse contains public meeting rooms, indoor recreational facilities, gymnasiums, kitchen, bathrooms, auditorium, and a library. The interior has a noteworthy lobby space with impressive classical detailing and design. Some of the classical details in the lobby include; four sets of massive Ionic columns, a herringbone brick floor, and ornamental iron railings. Exposed wooden trusses are found on the interior of the gymnasiums.

Eight feet above the marblecrete walls of the lobby are beautiful murals by artist John Warner Norton. These murals were painted in 1916 and include oil paint depictions of Lincoln, Jefferson, Madison, Henry Clay, Monroe, Washington, George Rogers Clark and Hamilton. John Norton worked in collaboration with influential architects, such as Holabird and Roche, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White. Some of his most noteworthy commissions include, the Cliff Dwellers Club, Fuller Park Assembly Hall, Pierce School, and the Chicago Board of Trade. The Hamilton Park murals were painted in dark earth tones and have historical figures in scenes with nature. The trees and foliage have an oriental influence. Biographical information on each depiction is written in gold-gilt lettering.

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The auditorium is positioned between the fieldhouse lobby and the library. It includes a stage and it seats approximately 900 people. The Art Deco interior is beautifully detailed with large decorative pilasters along the side walls. The capitals on the pilasters are embellished with gold and silver theater-mask face motifs. Modern acoustic tiles have been applied to the walls. Along the edge of the ceiling, around the entire room is a wide decorative panel with a single row of square coffering. Each of these squares has a decorative foliated border. Inside the coffering is either plain panels or grillwork. Suspended from the plaster ceiling are six large globe lights surrounded by intricate iron ceiling grilles. Two of the globe lights are no longer intact.

Through the years, the alterations and additions made to Hamilton Park have been primarily due to the changing recreation needs of the park. Today, Hamilton Park continues to maintain a high degree of integrity in the design and the architecture. The modern changes to the park have not significantly altered the historic character of the Olmsted Brothers' plan. The zones for active recreation have not been altered, and the paths remain intact. Although there has been some decline in the vegetation, the current plantings remain consistent with the historic design intent of the park. Hamilton Park continues to function as an actively used urban park and offers a variety of recreational activities.

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FEATURES IN HAMILTON PARK

Contributing

Non-contributing

Buildings

fieldhouse
boiler house

pool house/swimming pool

Sites

landscape

Structures

service yard

Objects

18 planting urns

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Hamilton Park meets with Criterion A and Criterion C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The property is nationally significant as one of the fourteen neighborhood parks planned by the South Park Commission in the early 1900s to offer social services and recreation facilities for immigrant neighborhoods on Chicago's south side. Hamilton Park qualifies for listing in the National Register under the multiple property documentation form entitled "The Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District". Hamilton Park is a notable example of the collaboration between an important landscape design firm, the Olmsted Brothers, and an architectural firm, D.H. Burnham and Company. Today, the park retains the distinctive architectural and landscape features designed by both the Olmsted Brothers and D.H. Burnham and Company. The park's period of significance spans from 1904, when the design was completed and initial construction began, to 1944, the arbitrary 50 year cut-off date for the National Register of Historic Places.

The South Park Commission, established by the South Park Act of February 24, 1869, was responsible for serving the area from the Chicago River south to 138th Street and from Lake Michigan west to Cicero Ave. Its jurisdiction included the towns of South Chicago, Hyde Park and Lake, as referenced in Section E, page 8 of the "Historic Resources of the Chicago Park District" Multiple Property Documentation Form. The South Park Commission played a significant role in the neighborhood park movement. It was the first of the Chicago Park Boards to take advantage of the small parks legislation of 1901. The South Park Commission had the advantage of the incorporation of the economic center of Chicago, the Loop, in its boundaries giving it a larger tax base for which to draw funds (Tippens 1988, 21)

In 1850, Chicago was a trading post with a population of 30,000 residents. At the turn of the century, thirty years after the South Park Commission was created, Chicago's population was 298,977. In 1903 the population had grown to 1,873,880. By 1910 the population had grown to over two million (Netsch 1989, 6). The physical, moral, and mental welfare of the people was a growing concern of the day. The South Park Commissioners believed that establishing useful as well as ornamental parks would be the most important factor in solving the problems of overcrowding (South Park

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Commissioners 1904, 7). The parks were to be neighborhood centers providing much needed public services. The fieldhouse, a new building type, would provide for an intellectual and social life, not only in summer, but during the long winters.

The General Superintendent of the South Park Commission, J. Frank Foster, is said to be "the father of the small park" (Tippens 1988, 21). This new park type, considered interchangeable as "small" or "neighborhood" parks, came out of the Progressive Reform Movement to enhance the lives of people living in tenement neighborhoods. Foster started as an engineer for the South Parks in 1881, and was promoted to General Superintendent in 1892. He served in this position until 1925. His visionary proposition for small parks included: a ball field large enough for two games to be played at a time, a running track, sand pits, swimming pool, wading pool, and outdoor gymnasiums. His plan also included provisions for a community center building, open day and evening, with indoor gymnasiums and assembly hall and club rooms (Tippens 1988, 22).

Foster's plans were outlined in the South Park's Annual Report of 1905, which stated:

1. To take children from the streets and alleys and give them a better environment and safer place in which to play. This will relieve parents of care and anxiety concerning the safety of their children. Truck driver, street-car man, policemen and others whom are indirectly involved in care of children will also be relieved.
2. To encourage working boys and girls and adults to spend their idle hours in a wholesome environment and away from questionable amusements.
3. To encourage both children and adults to give attention to personal hygiene, - exercise and bathing chiefly.
4. To furnish wholesome amusements for adults and others who do not participate in the activities of gymnasium, athletic and play fields (South Park Commissioners 1905, 49).

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Since Foster was not a landscape designer or an architect, the services of the Olmsted Brothers, as landscape architects, and the firm of D.H. Burnham and Co., as architects, were rendered. A 34 acre site was acquired for an experimental neighborhood park in 1903 near the Stock Yards, known as McKinley Park. Many of the features suggested by Foster were included. McKinley Park was such an immediate success that the South Park Commission decided to establish a system of fourteen neighborhood parks in 1903 (Section FII 1990, 12).

The amendment to the Park Act in 1903, authorizing the creation of new parks allowed the South Park Commission to investigate the recreation needs of the neighborhoods. Prior to this legislation whole neighborhoods had grown up remote from existing parks. Choosing the park sites was done in a careful and systematic manner. Sealed proposals were received, localities examined, and the needs of the various neighborhoods thoroughly canvassed (Annual Report 1904, 5). The region of Englewood, in which Hamilton Park is located, did not have any parks of its own. Social reformers believed that improving the conditions of these congested neighborhoods would solve problems of repressed ambition and discontent and that would benefit the entire city.

As explained in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, the South Park Commission contacted the Olmsted Brothers and D.H. Burnham and Company for design ideas in 1903. By 1897, the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. had passed into the hands of his sons, John Charles and Frederick Law Jr. They followed in their father's tradition as the Olmsted Brothers. The older son, John Charles, had been in practice with his father since 1875. In 1891, the Olmsteds and Daniel H. Burnham began the design work to transform Jackson Park into the Columbian Exposition of 1893. After the Columbian Exposition the Olmsted Brothers were asked to restore Jackson Park to its original pastoral setting. It was not long after this that the Olmsted Brothers and D.H. Burnham and Company began the designs for the fourteen neighborhood parks and squares. From 1893 to two decades after the Columbian Exposition, the Olmsteds' and Burnham's firms continually worked for the South Park

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Commission.

Burnham hired a new designer, Edward Bennett, for the fieldhouse project. Bennett was unable to come from New York until mid-March of 1904. The landscape design proceeded ahead of the built facilities, since the preliminary designs were to be completed by March 1, 1904. This included the designs for six squares (parks under 10 acres) and eight small parks (ranging from 28 to 56 acres). A letter to the Olmsteds from the Burnham firm confirmed that Bennett was working on the fieldhouse designs by April 6, 1904 (Tippens and Sniderman 1989, 22).

Each of the parks was to incorporate the program components which had been conceived by J. Frank Foster. With such a compact area to work with, especially in the squares, the Olmsteds felt that the ornamental planting and curving walkways of the traditional "pleasure grounds" would have to be sacrificed for open space needed to incorporate recreation facilities. However, the parks and squares would not strictly be for athletics, they would also include a scenic landscape for relaxation (Tippens and Sniderman 1989, 22).

The Olmsteds were inspired by the comprehensive city planning and zoning that was taking place in Germany as well as other European design. Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. stated:

On the whole the necessary ingredients of a city playground do not tend to make it beautiful perforce any more than a railroad bridge or a highway bridge is beautiful perforce. But anyone who has seen the beautiful tree-framed grassless plazas of the south of France and Italy and Spanish countries knows that the essential elements of a city playground of the most strictly athletic kind may be composed into an orderly whole that is far from devoid of beauty (Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. "Parks and Playgrounds," *American Magazine of Art* 11 (1919-1920): 308, as cited in *A Breath of Fresh Air* 1989, 23).

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The plan for each park followed a basic design approach. The facilities that required supervision ran along a single edge of the park. Athletic facilities, such as the children's playground, running track, wading pool, separate men's and women's open air gymnasiums, and swimming and changing booths were symmetrically placed in the precinct around the fieldhouse. The rest of the park was devoted to a ball field surrounded by a tree lined walking path. This framed walkway provided a view across the ball field to a focal point, the fieldhouse. Despite the similarities of sites and program requirements, the Olmsteds designed each park to be unique (Tippens and Sniderman 1989, 23).

The community of Englewood, where Hamilton Park is located, developed as a result of the railroads that located their stations in this area. The Michigan, Southern and Northern Indiana Railway (now part of the New York Central line) was the first to lay tracks through the area. A few months later the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad was built at the intersection of 63rd and LaSalle Streets. That same year, 1852, the Wabash Railroad was built and the intersection was called "Chicago Junction." In 1854, the Fort Wayne Railroad was built. The earliest settlers were railroad workers, largely Irish and German. In 1865, the township of Lake was incorporated and the area known as Junction Grove was changed to Englewood, in honor of a town of the same name in New Jersey from which many of the residents migrated. The establishment of the Cook County Normal School, in 1868, attracted the settlement of a group of professional and middle class businessmen to the area. The area was known as Normal Park. This spawned further development in the area, but the first extensive settlement in Englewood came after the Chicago Fire in 1871 when thousands of people were seeking houses outside of the city (Stampley 1979, 1).

Englewood offered excellent transportation. With the completion of the Englewood branch of the elevated railway in 1907, many stockyards and industrial workers, mainly Irish, German and Swedish, started to move to Englewood from Bridgeport and the "Back of the Yards." Most of the single-family homes in the community at this time were of frame construction. Many were large and elaborate, but most of them were small workingmen's cottages. The building of apartments was stimulated by the

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extension of the "El" in 1907 (Stampley 1979, 2). With the substantial growth of the area, it was in need of a neighborhood park. Hamilton Park, first known as Park number 9 out of the fourteen parks planned, opened to the public in April of 1905.

Though Hamilton Park was clearly part of the South Park Commission's revolutionary neighborhood park system, it was not originally constructed with all of the prototypical elements laid out by the Olmsted Brothers. When first constructed in 1904, Hamilton Park had only a fieldhouse, walkways, a wading pool, plantings, and a ball field. Original plans for the park did not include a larger swimming pool, outdoor gymnasiums, a running track, and a children's playground. The citizens of the surrounding area wanted a "choice ornamental park." (Olmsted Papers 1904). On a visit to the park with Mr. Foster on May 12, 1906, J.C. Olmsted noted "that the people of the vicinity at first protested against any indoor or outdoor gymnasium or children's apparatus." Community opinion changed after people saw the components in the other neighborhood parks of the South Park Commission. Olmsted explained that they petitioned for the addition of these elements. (Olmsted Papers 1906). By the time of his visit, the outdoor gymnasiums had been added. The high use of the wading pool resulted in the construction of temporary wooden bathing houses on the north side. By 1909, the Olmsted Brothers had developed another plan which included the additions of the men's and women's open air gymnasiums, the children's playground, tennis courts, and temporary bathing houses. Olmsted believed that it wouldn't be long before a swimming pool and dressing rooms would be added, such as with the other parks.

The design for the fieldhouses at the new parks was the responsibility of Edward Bennett for D.H. Burnham and Company. As a new building type, this was an undefined area of architecture. In the past most parks included refectories, boathouses and buildings for specific recreation uses. As explained in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, Foster's vision for the neighborhood parks required a structure that would combine indoor athletics with educational and social programs. The program was derived from the settlement house concept of a social center and the play movement's emphasis on recreation. As Jacob Riis stated when visiting Chicago in

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1899: "A boy robbed of his chance to play will not be an honest and effective man-you can't depend on him at the polls" (Tippens 1988, 28).

The fieldhouses were to have architectural designs that fostered public taste. Bennett varied the designs from park to park, depending on size, neighborhood context, and landscape design. The buildings were reminiscent of the buildings of the World's Columbian Exposition. Bennett believed that "classical elements are best for the public realm" (Tippens and Sniderman 1989, 24). The buildings were designed with a court of honor around a body of water. The building material of the new buildings was to be reinforced concrete which had become known as "popcorn concrete" or "marblecrete" (Section FII 1990, 5). The classical detailing was limited to a simplified vocabulary due to the rough nature of the material, making the buildings devoid of intricacies.

The landscape design by the Olmsted Brothers for Hamilton Park is naturalistic in form with some formal plantings. The ball field, in the center of the park, was left open and free of plantings, providing for a meadow which is found in picturesque landscape designs. Around the ball field, Cottonwood trees were planted on either side of the walkway. Underneath the Cottonwoods, on the interior of the walkway, a mixture of low plantings such as Bramble, Cork Bark Euonymus, Arkansas Rose, Chokeberry, Pasture Rose, Early Wild Rose, and Bittersweet were planted. The music court in front of the fieldhouse consisted of a grid of American Elm trees. Along the north end sidewalk of the park, Trees of Heaven were planted in a row with a low ground covering of Prairie Rose. The east and west perimeters of the park, along the railway lines, had dense plantings of trees and low ground coverings. The trees consisted of Norway Maples, Tree of Heaven, European Linden, Carolina Poplar, and Green Ash. A mixture of under story plantings, similar to what was found around the perimeter of the ball field, were planted amidst the variety of trees. Along the south end walkway, rows of trees were planted; Scarlet Thorn, along the outer edge of the walk, and Linden trees, along the inner edge of the walk. Much of the understory plantings are gone. Fortunately, recent tree replantings have been sensitive to the historic planting intent.

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By 1906, the design work for the parks had been completed and ten of the fourteen parks had been constructed. The parks became community centers of the neighborhoods and were excessively used. Mr. Foster's tables showed that in the nine months from December, 1905, to August, 1906 the total attendance at the playgrounds was 4,442,768 (*Park and Cemetery* 1906, 170).

The Hamilton Park fieldhouse, from reports by J.C. Olmsted, was heavily used by the community. The building's meeting rooms were in constant demand. There were as many as five or six applications a day for the large hall. It was used almost every night for lectures, society meetings, dances, etc. It was noted that the hall was the most used of any of the new parks due to the intellectual character of the neighboring population (Olmsted Papers 1906).

The success of the neighborhood parks set a precedent for the development of neighborhood parks throughout the United States. The immediate success of the South Park Commission's small parks encouraged the fledgling Playground Association of America to hold its first annual convention in Chicago in 1907. President Theodore Roosevelt issued a public statement suggesting that municipalities send representatives to the conference: "...to see the magnificent system that Chicago has erected in its South Park district, one of the most notable civic achievements of any American city" (South Park Commission 1909, 37).

The parks often became the only source of such services as bathing facilities, hot meals sold at cost, English lessons for adults and children, vocational training, recreation and athletics, and social events. They also had the earliest neighborhood branches of the Chicago Public Library. Hamilton Park had a reading room that was one of these branches. The neighborhood parks were also a place to relax in a clean environment after a twelve-hour day. The parks represented a period in which all levels of society were united in an effort to make the city a better place to live (Netsch 1989, 8).

The interior of the fieldhouse has original murals by artist John Warner Norton. J.W.

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Norton was on the faculty of the Art Institute when he was commissioned by the South Park Commission to paint murals in the fieldhouses of the new neighborhood south parks. The murals represented events in American history. Mural commissions for the World's Columbian Exposition sparked a new interest in murals (Zimmer 1991, 52). It was noted in the January 18, 1916 minutes of the South Park Commission that a bill for \$123.75 was submitted by James Hunt for services in furnishing labor and material for hanging fourteen panel paintings delivered by John W. Norton at Hamilton Park (Official Proceedings of the South Park Commission 1916, 93). These murals represent the Americanization process that was taking place in the fieldhouses of immigrant neighborhoods like Englewood. They were more than just art, they were a lesson in American history.

Throughout the 1920s, Hamilton Park was heavily used. Every assembly room was booked everyday and night (Osborn 1928, 68). There was not enough room to seat the people that wanted to watch the plays that were put on by the drama club. There were so many clubs and activities going on at the park that the facilities became inadequate. Previous to the consolidation of the Chicago Park District in 1934, in-house South Park Commission designers developed plans for an assembly hall and a branch library addition that was built on the north facade of the fieldhouse. The exterior of the new addition was designed to match the original structure in form and materials and the interior still retains much of its fanciful Art Deco design.

Other changes have occurred in Hamilton Park over its ninety year history. In 1931, a boiler house, designed by the same in-house South Park Commission staff, was added to the northwest corner of the park. Later additions include a spray pool (showing up in plans after the 1940s) and a more recent children's playground (from the late 1980s), on the east side of the fieldhouse; tennis courts, that replaced the early clay tennis courts that were used when the park was the strongest tennis center in the midwest (Osborn 1928, 70); a handball court in the 1950s, just west of the music court; and a swimming pool and pool house from the 1970s, on the east side of the park. Many of the plantings have changed throughout the years. Most of the trees have been replaced around the ball field and much of the under-story plantings have been

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permanently removed, possibly for security reasons. However, the new trees have been planted in a way that is empathetic to the original design.

The importance of Hamilton Park can be seen in the relationship of the architecture with the landscape as well as in the social context of the "Reform Movement." Today, Hamilton Park remains much as it did in 1906, when President Roosevelt suggested that municipalities send representatives to see what the South Park Commission had accomplished.

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Hamilton Park

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is bounded on the north by the south curb line of 72nd Street, between the right-of-way of the Chicago and Western Indiana Railway and the right-of-way of the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railway, and on the south by the north curb line of 74th Street between the right-of-way of the Chicago and Western Indiana Railway and the right-of-way of the Rock Island and Pacific Railway, and on the east by the west fence right-of-way of the Rock Island and Pacific Railway between 72nd Street and 74th Street, and on the west by the east fence right-of-way of the Chicago and Western Indiana Railway between 72nd Street and 74th Street.

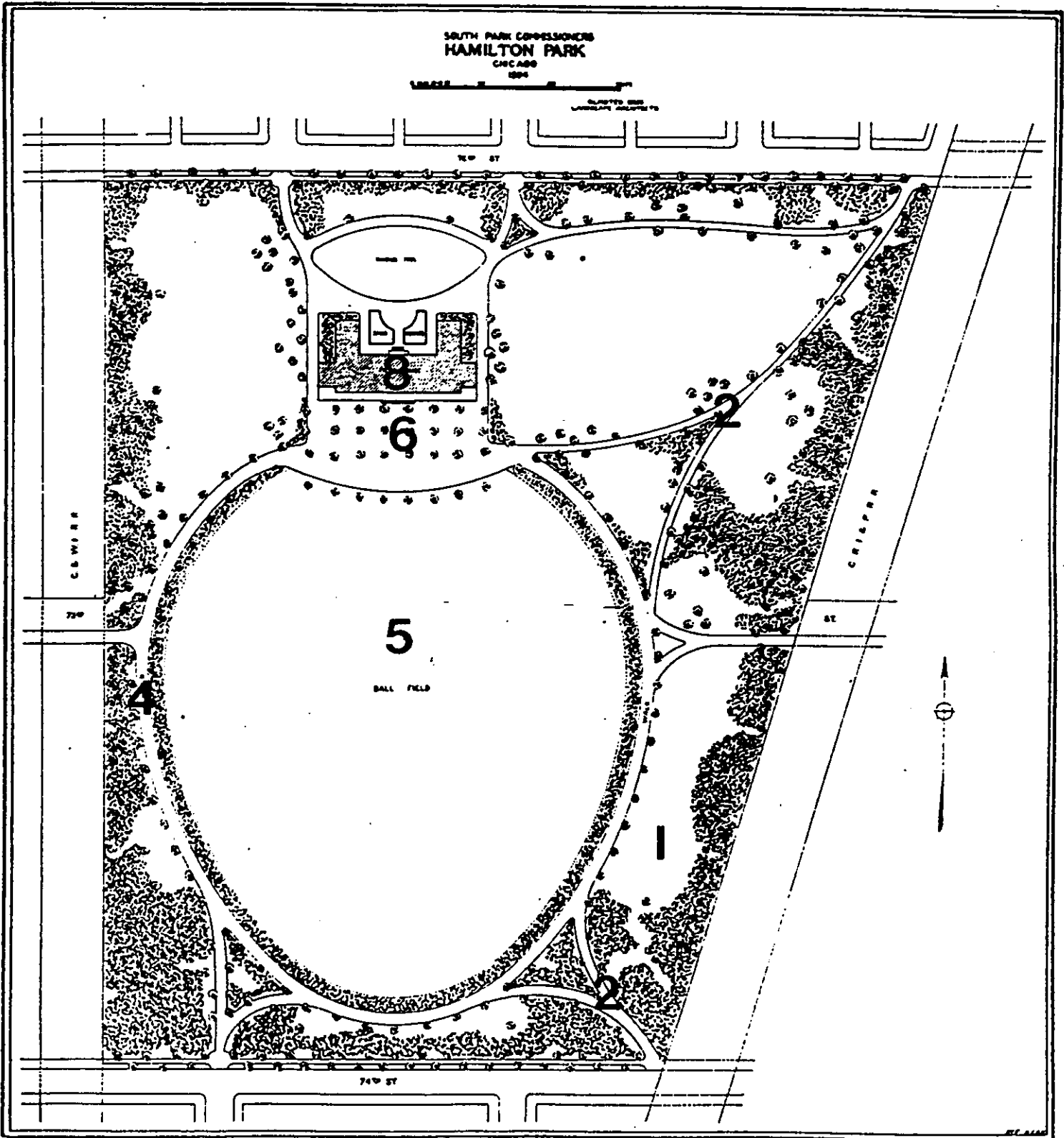
Boundary Justification

This is the plot of land historically associated with the park during its period of significance.

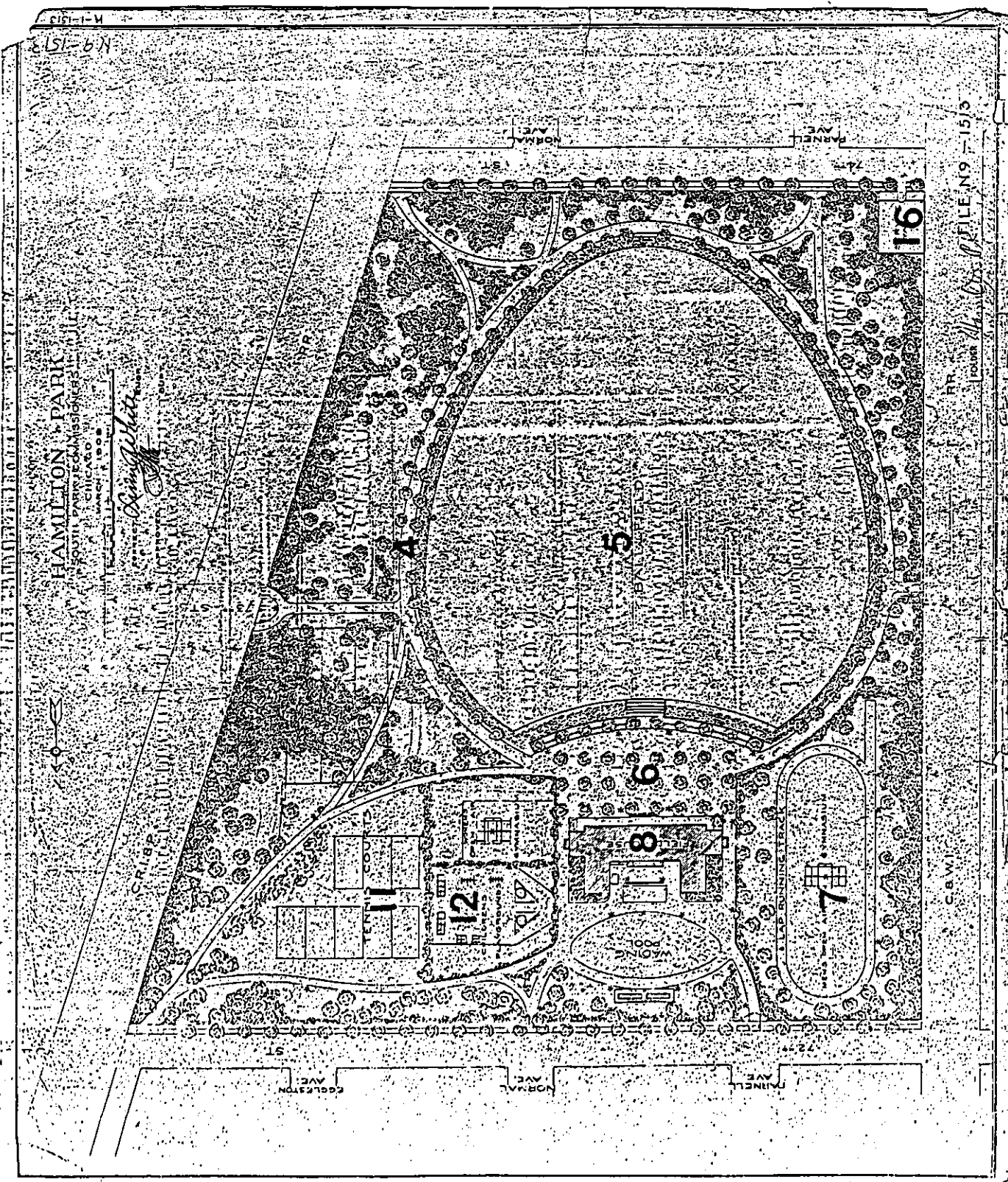
SOUTH PARK COMMISSIONERS
HAMILTON PARK
CHICAGO
1894

SCALE 1" = 100'

QUARTY 200
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



A



HAMILTON PARK
 1000 1/2 N. 15th St.
 WASHINGTON, D.C.

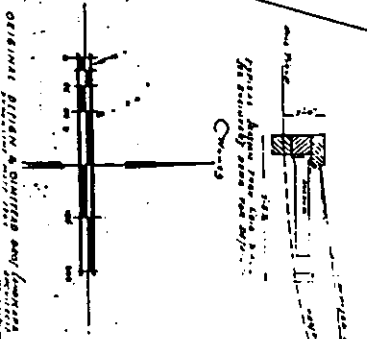
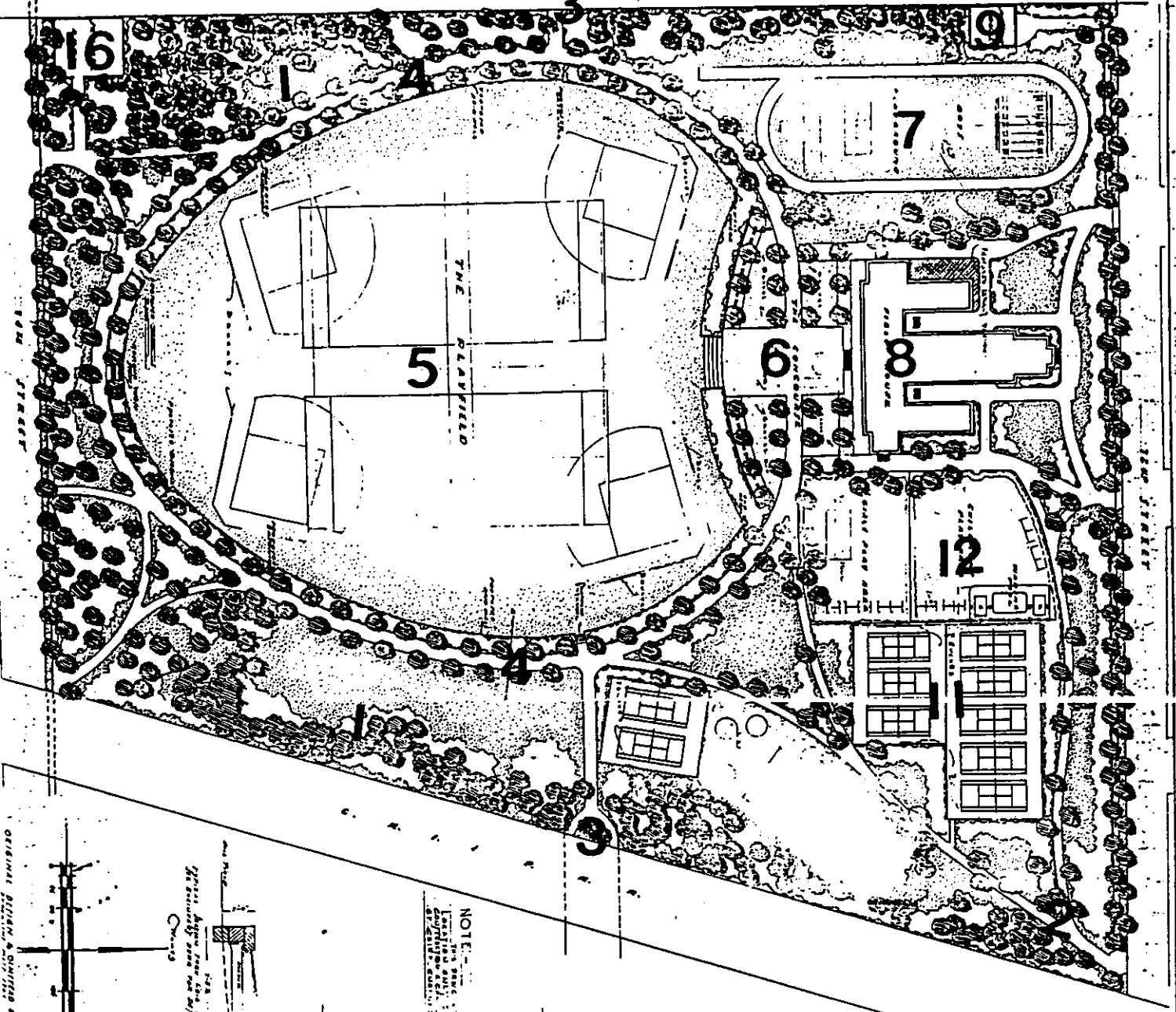
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CR. 1000 1/2 N. 15th St.
 WASHINGTON, D.C.

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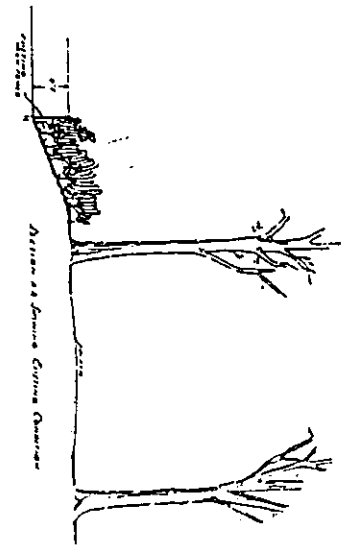


**CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT
LANDSCAPE DESIGN SECTION**

HAMILTON PARK
PROPOSED SIDEWALK, DRAINAGE
& PLANTING PLAN

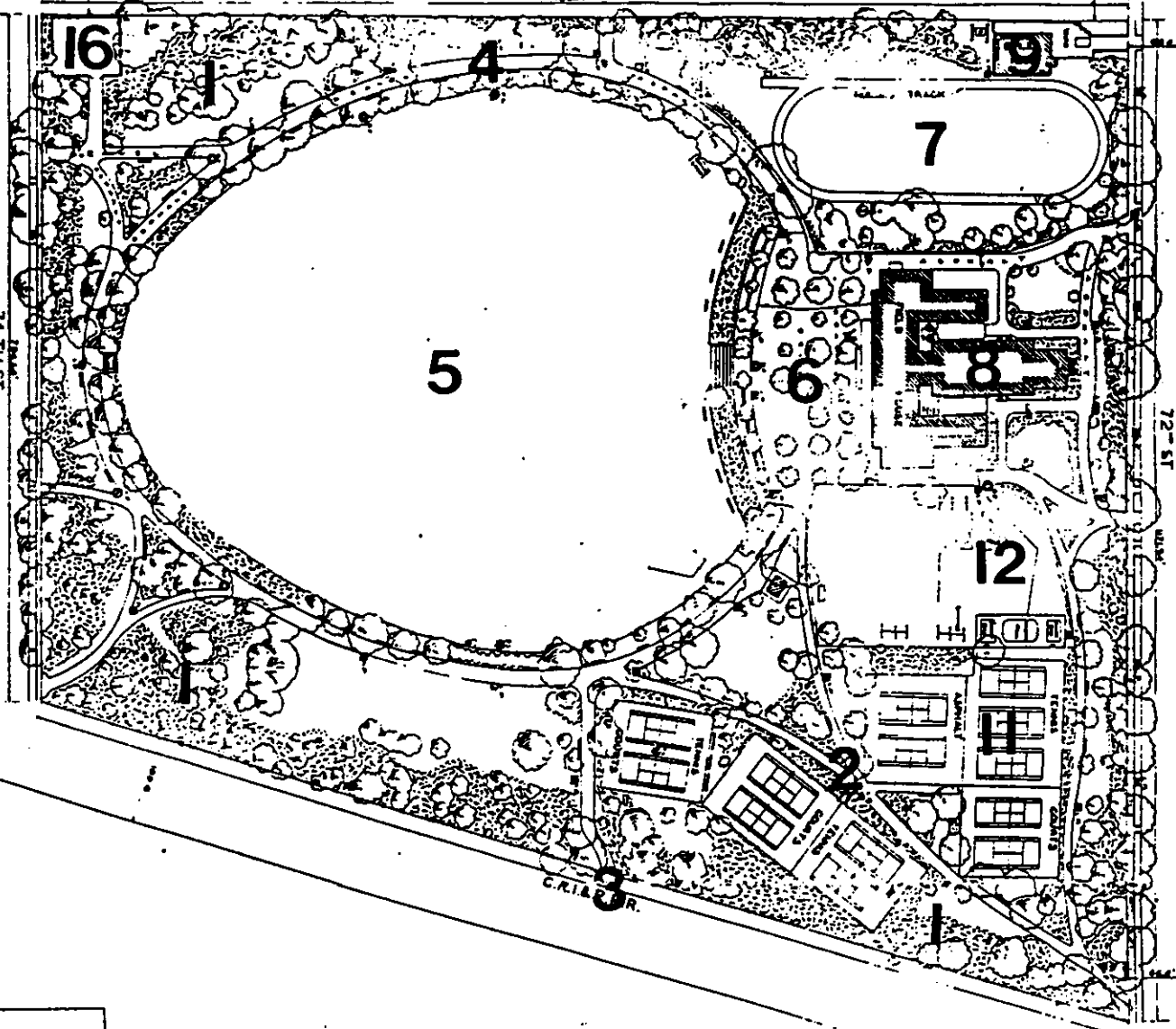
DATE	NOV 1914
BY	W. W. WALKER
CHECKED BY	
APPROVED BY	
REVISIONS	

NOTE:
THE PARK DISTRICT HAS BEEN
DESIGNED FOR THE PARK
DISTRICT AND IS NOT TO BE
CONSIDERED AS A PART OF THE
CITY'S GENERAL PLAN.



C

C. & W. I. R.R.



74 TH ST

72 ST

C. & W. I. R.R.

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

HAMIL TOWN PARK

TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

GENERAL PLAN

Scale: 1" = 50' - 0"

Drawn by: [Name]

Checked by: [Name]

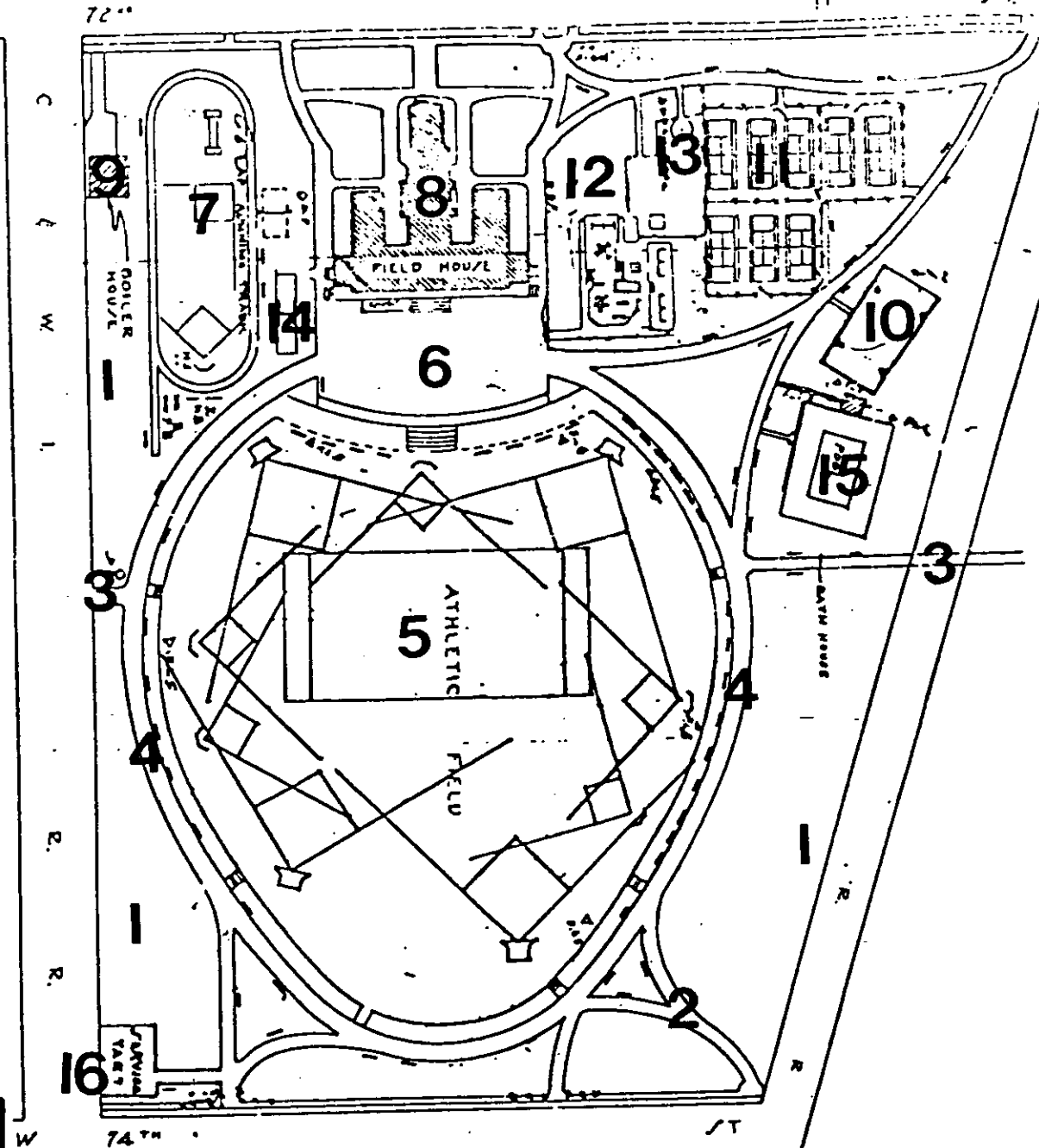
Approved by: [Name]

D

PLOT PLAN
HAMILTON PARK
 CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT

SCALE: 1"=160'-0"

PARK NO. 9
 COMM. NO. 48A

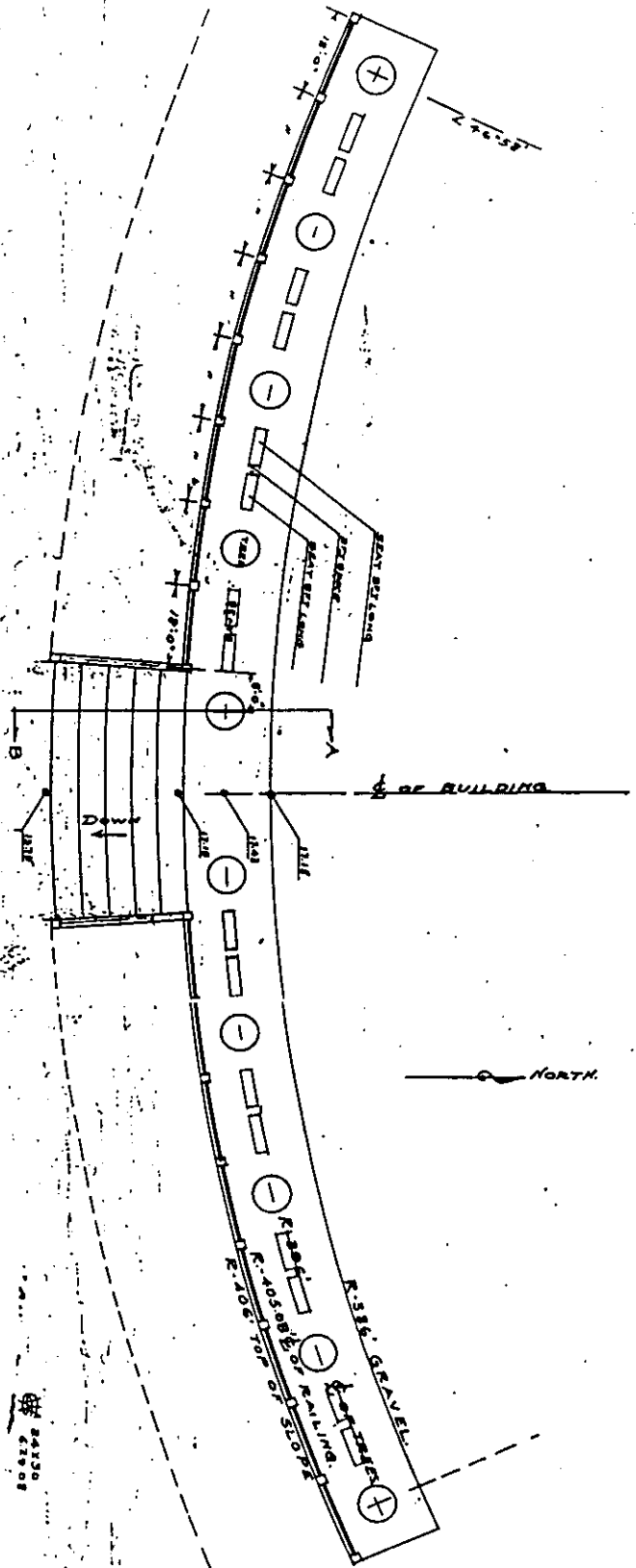
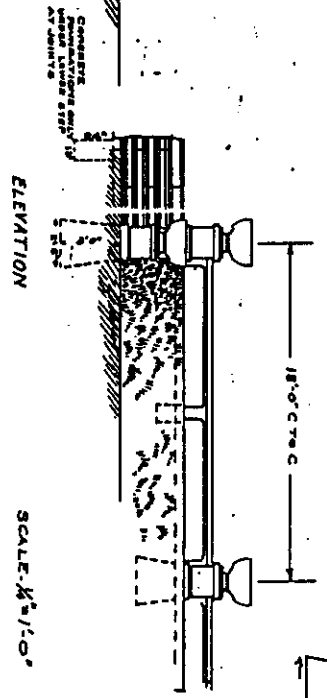
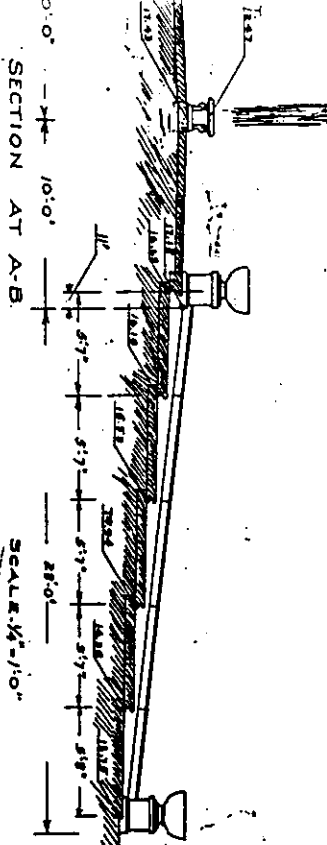
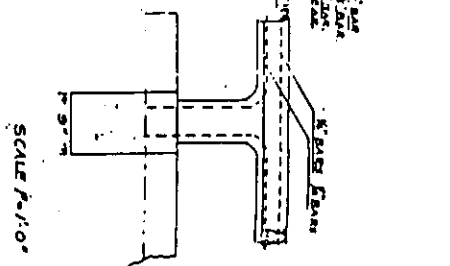
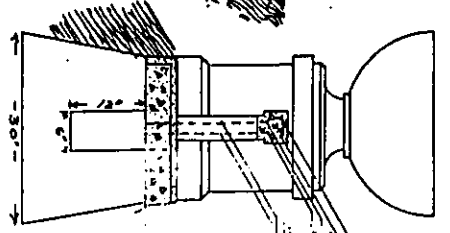
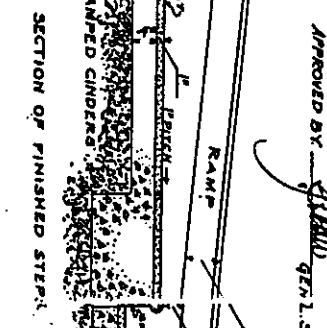
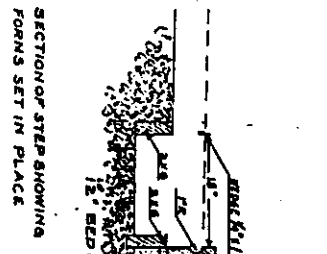


E

CONCRETE STEPS, BASES AND RAILINGS,
 HAMILTON PARK
 SOUTH PARK COMMISSIONERS.

REVISED JULY 30 1908

APPROVED BY *[Signature]*
 GEN'L. SUPT.
 CORRECTED BY *[Signature]*
 ENGR. WHEAT.



24330
 47308





United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. Box 37127

Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to inform you that the following properties have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. For further information call 202/343-9542.

RECEIVED

MAY 01 1995

Preservation Services
APR 28 1995

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 4/17/95 THROUGH 4/21/95

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number NHL Status, Action, Date, Multiple Name

- ARKANSAS, HOT SPRING COUNTY, Cabin No. 1, Cabin area access rd., Lake Catherine State Park, Shorewood Hills, 95000455, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Facilities Constructed by the CCC in Arkansas MPS)
- ARKANSAS, PRAIRIE COUNTY, Prairie County Courthouse, Jct. of Magnolia and Prairie Sts., DeValls Bluff, 95000457, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- ARKANSAS, WASHINGTON COUNTY, Chi Omega Chapter House, 940 Maple St., Fayetteville, 95000456, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- COLORADO, EL PASO COUNTY, Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot, 252 ft. W of Denver St. on Rock Island RR right-of-way, Calhan, 95000476, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- FLORIDA, PALM BEACH COUNTY, Milton--Myers American Legion Post No. 65, 263 NE. 5th Ave., Delray Beach, 95000471, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- FLORIDA, ST. LUCIE COUNTY, Frere, Jules, House, 2404 Sunrise Blvd., Fort Pierce, 95000467, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- FLORIDA, SUWANNEE COUNTY, Allison, George, House, 418 W. Duval St., Live Oak, 95000369, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- ILLINOIS, ADAMS COUNTY, South Side German Historic District (Boundary Increase), Roughly bounded by Jefferson, S. 12th, Jackson and S. 5th Sts., Quincy, 95000481, BOUNDARY INCREASE, 4/20/95
- ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, Moultrie County Courthouse, 10 S. Main St., Sullivan, 95000489, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Bryn Mawr Avenue Historic District, Bryn Mawr Ave. from Sheridan Rd. to Broadway, Chicago, 95000482, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Hamilton Park, 513 W. 72nd St., Chicago, 95000487, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)
- ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Indian Boundary Park, 2500 W. Lunt, Chicago, 95000485, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)
- ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Portage Park, 4100 N. Long Ave., Chicago, 95000484, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)
- ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Riis, Jacob A. Park, 6100 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, 95000483, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)
- ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Trumbull Park, 2400 E. 105th St., Chicago, 95000486, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Chicago Park District MPS)
- ILLINOIS, MARION COUNTY, Jehle, Louis, House, 511 E. Fifth St., Pana, 95000490, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- ILLINOIS, MERCER COUNTY, Willits, Levi, House, 202 Main St., New Boston, 95000488, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- ILLINOIS, WOODFORD COUNTY, Schertz, Joseph, House, IL 116, 1 mi. W of city limits, Metamora vicinity, 95000491, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- IOWA, HANCOCK COUNTY, Pilot Knob State Park: Portals in Area 5b, Off IA 9 SE of Forest City, y Pilot Knob State Park, Forest City vicinity, 95000362, NOMINATION, 4/17/95 (CCC Properties in Iowa State Parks MPS)
- IOWA, JACKSON COUNTY, Squiers, J. E., House, 418 W. Pleasant St., Maquoketa, 95000385, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Maquoketa MPS)
- KANSAS, PAWNEE COUNTY, Babbitt--Doerr House, 423 W. 5th St., Larned, 95000477, NOMINATION, 4/20/95
- MICHIGAN, MARQUETTE COUNTY, Negaunee State Bank Building, 331 Iron St., Negaunee, 95000295, NOMINATION, 4/13/95
- NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Alert--Hatcher Building, Jct. of Second Ave. and Main St., SE corner, Hillsboro, 95000460, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)
- NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Bucher, William H., House, 300 W. Main St., Hillsboro, 95000461, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)
- NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Mevers House, Main St. N side between 4th and 5th Aves., Hillsboro, 95000463, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)
- NEW MEXICO, SIERRA COUNTY, Miller, George Tambling and Ninette Stocker, House, Elenora St. S side, W of Union Church, Hillsboro, 95000465, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Hillsboro MPS)
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- NEW YORK, CAYUGA COUNTY, House at 15 East Cayuga Street, 15 E. Cayuga St., Moravia, 95000472, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Moravia MPS)
- NEW YORK, ESSEX COUNTY, Trudeau Sanatorium, Trudeau Rd., Saranac Lake vicinity, 95000479, NOMINATION, 4/20/95 (Saranac Lake MPS)
- NEW YORK, NIAGARA COUNTY, Bond, Col. William M. and Nancy Ralston, House, 143 Ontario St., Lockport, 95000529, NOMINATION, 4/20/95

Continued on next page